

TEACHER'S QUESTIONING STRATEGIES IN TEACHING DESCRIPTIVE WRITING; A CASE STUDY AT SMAN 28 BONE

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ABSTRACT

The research was to reveal (1) questioning strategies used by the teacher in teaching descriptive writing, (2) the teacher's purposes of using the questioning strategies in teaching descriptive writing, and (3) students' perception on the teacher's use of questioning in teaching descriptive writing. The research employed a single-case study design and was conducted at a leading state senior high school in the district of Bone. One of the EFL teachers at the school was purposively chosen as the subject, and the data were obtained through classroom observation and interview. The findings disclose that (1) the teachers employed four questioning strategies; prior knowledge-based, lecture-based, fact-based and thinking based questioning, (2) the teacher used prior knowledge-based questioning to remind the students of the previous lesson and to commence the classroom interaction with them, lecture-based questioning to maintain the classroom interaction and to check the students' comprehension, and both fact-based and thinking-based questioning to help the students develop their ideas (brainstorming), and (3) in the students' perception, the teacher's questioning helped them understand the concept of descriptive writing, stimulated their critical thinking and helped them outline their writing. Thus, it can be inferred that (1) questioning was an important part of the teacher's strategy in teaching descriptive writing, (2) the teacher's use of the four questioning strategies was due to his belief that the descriptive writing teaching and learning process could go smoothly through interactive communication, which was built by his questions and the students' answers, and (3) the students have positive perception on the teacher's use of questioning in teaching descriptive writing.

Keywords : *Questioning, Strategies, Descriptive Writing*

INTRODUCTION

A. Background

In language learning, there are four skills that learners intend or are intended to have; listening, speaking, reading and writing. Listening skill deals with the ability to catch information from oral messages; speaking refers to the ability to describe ideas orally; reading signals the ability to get information from written messages; and writing is the ability to produce written discourses. *To have those skills, learners need to be good at the elements of language such as vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation (Brown, 2001).*

Considering the benefits that students can derive from having sufficient writing skill, a writing class is supposed to be "equipped" with effective strategies, and the strategies should be based on the essence of writing and problems faced by students in the demanding task. Graham (1997) proposed that *writing is a complex metacognitive activity that requires an individual's knowledge, linguistic competence, strategies and ability to coordinate multiple processes.*

Following this, Nunan (2003) mentioned *that technically, writing is a process in which a writer imagines, drafts, organizes, reads, edits and rereads a text. Conclusively, it takes sufficient linguistic competence, imagination, knowledge and strategies to write well.*

Thus, we can now conjecture the common problems faced by learners in the writing learning process. Writing is believed to trouble many EFL learners. A number of findings indicate that students commonly encounter both linguistic and non-linguistic problems when doing their writing task. Abdulkareem (2015), *for instance, found that the common problems faced by Malaysian students in writing deal with vocabulary register, organization of ideas, grammar and spelling, and Huy (2015) discovered that Vietnamese students' poor writings are mostly due to their low competence in grammar and vocabulary and low motivation. Undoubtedly, this is such a challenge to EFL teachers in a writing class.*

Dealing with the principles of writing and common problems faced by learners in doing the challenging task, the above-mentioned ideas lead us to apprehend that teaching writing means guiding learners through the mental process of converting their ideas into a written work. *This obviously implies that whatever a writing teacher does in the learning process is supposed to be a stimulant to learners' imagination as mentioned by Cox and Griffith (2007). The deeper implication is that in the writing class, the teacher should be able to encourage the learners to exploit not only their linguistic competence but also their imaginary power in the effort to produce decent written works. Of the four types of writing (exposition, argumentation, description and narrative), description seems so typical since it is essentially "painting" of a topic through words (Den, 2013). Consequently, this type of writing highly requires critical thinking and becomes a hard task for many students as mentioned by Etemadzadeh, Seifi & Far (2013).*

In relation to this, the three scholars propose that without critical thinking, even a student with sufficient linguistic competence cannot develop his ideas to produce a readable descriptive text. This signals that improving students' critical thinking skill is one of the important deeds that EFL teachers have to do when teaching this type of writing. *As a researcher can develop some ideas pertinent to the research, which are the theories of teacher's questioning, writing, descriptive writing and perception. The supported by Sadker, Sadker and Zittleman (2011) have classified teacher's questions into six types; knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation question. The three scholars also have described the types of question as follows.; lecture-based or didactic, fact-based and thinking-based questioning. As writer found five purposes of applying the questioning strategies; to remind the students of the previous lesson (prior knowledge-based), to commence classroom interaction with them (prior knowledge-based). Teacher's questioning can improve students' descriptive writing (Abdulkareem, 2015). In line with this, Etemadzadah, Seidi and Far (2013) claim that students can demonstrate 17% improvement in their descriptive writing skill because of teacher's use of questioning in the learning process.*

From those gratifying verdicts, we can ascertain that questioning is such an effective tool that an EFL teacher can use to improve students' descriptive writing skill in the teaching and learning process.

B. Research Questions

The research questions below were formulated as the follow-up to the above issues;

1. What are the questioning strategies used by the teacher in teaching descriptive writing?
2. What are the teacher's purposes of using the questioning strategies in teaching descriptive writing?
3. How do the students perceive the teacher's use of questioning in teaching descriptive writing?

C. Objectives of the Research

Following those formulated research questions, the research sought to explore; the questioning strategies used by the teacher in teaching descriptive writing of using the questioning strategies in teaching descriptive writing and on the teacher's use of questioning in teaching descriptive writing.

D. Significance of the Research

Exploring teacher's use of questioning in teaching writing, the study was highly considered to have both theoretical and practical significance. Theoretically, the research was to contribute towards the theories of questioning and writing learning. Meanwhile, practically, the study was projected to result in findings which become another reference for EFL teachers dealing with how to use questioning effectively in teaching writing.

E. Scope of the Research

Considering the limited time, the researcher restricted the study in terms of discipline, content, activity and location. In discipline, the study was in the domain of applied linguistics in the area of discourse analysis, specifically in the sphere of conversation analysis; in content, it sought to explore teacher's questioning in teaching writing; in activity, it was conducted through data collection (observation and interview), data analysis (data condensation, data display, conclusion drawing and verification), and reporting; and in location, it was undertaken at SMAN 28 Bone, South Sulawesi.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

1. Teacher's Questioning

Cambridge advanced learner's dictionary (2008) provides that "questioning" refers to the act of asking a question or a situation in which one asks questions. Definitely, the word cannot be separated from its root, "question", which literally means "a sentence or phrase used to find information from an interlocutor". When, for example, the police take a suspect into questioning, what happens is that they try to obtain some information from the suspect through questions. From here, we can see that essentially, questioning is an intentional act of stimulating someone to provide expected information through questions. Thus, it can be inferred that the term "teacher's questioning" signals teacher's purposeful act of asking questions in classroom interaction.

a. Types of Teacher's Question

Sadker, Sadker and Zittleman (2011) have classified teacher's questions into six types; knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation question. The three

scholars also have described the types of question as follows; *Knowledge Questions* , *Comprehension Questions*, *Application Questions*, *Analysis Questions*, *Synthesis Questions*, and *Evaluation Questions*

b. Teacher's Questioning Strategies.

Sadker, Sadker and Zittleman (2011) have mentioned that there are three main strategies of questioning typically applied by teachers in classroom interaction; lecture-based or didactic, fact-based and thinking-based questioning. The three scholars also have detailed these strategies as follows.

- Lecture- based Questioning

Usually, while the teacher is describing the content being learned, there is a very little interaction between the teacher and students. In such a moment, the teacher-student interaction occurs only when the teacher asks an occasional question regarding the content being described in the middle of his talk. Inserting the occasional question into the talk means applying what is called lecture-based questioning. Example;

"Ideally, a paragraph consists of one main idea and some supporting ideas. Do you know what I mean by main idea here?"

- Fact- based Questioning

The fact-based is a questioning strategy that a teacher employs by asking the students some questions, which are designed primarily to elicit facts. The feedback from the teacher revolves primarily around responses such as 'right', 'good', 'yes', and 'no'. In this strategy, there is much teacher-student interaction, but the interaction tends to be brief. Example;

Teacher : "What is the largest city in China?"

Student 1 : "Shanghai."

Teacher : "Right. Now, how many citizens does the city have?"

Student 2 : "Two millions, Sir."

Teacher : "No."

- Thinking- based Questioning

Thinking-based is a questioning strategy that encourages the teacher-student and student-student dialogue. Applying this strategy means asking questions which stimulate thinking and discussion. In general, the questions do not have one right answer, therefore, "right" and "wrong" will not be the feedback. Instead, the teacher tends to comment on or add to what students have said. For instance, when intending the students to talk or write about the right punishment for a cold-blooded murderer, the teacher may ask *"does a cold-blooded killer deserve death sentence?"*.

2. Writing

Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2008) provides four definitions of writing; (1) a person's style of writing, (2) something which has been written or printed, (3) the written work and (4) the activity of creating pieces of written work. Nonetheless, in the context of EFL learning, the term "writing" seems to merely refer to the activity of creating written work or the skill which deals with the ability to express ideas through written language. As a process of ideas expressing through written language, writing is a complex metacognitive activity that draws on an individual's

knowledge, basic skill, strategies, and ability to coordinate multiple processes (Brown, 2001). Supporting this, Nunan (2003) mentioned that the activity of writing ideally involves imagining, drafting, organizing, editing, reading and rereading what is being written. Furthermore, Nunan (2003) proposed four vital areas in the writing process; (1) knowledge of writing and writing topics, (2) skill for producing and crafting text, (3) motivation to write with enthusiasm and (4) strategies to archive writing goals. From here, we can see that it does take both linguistic and non-linguistic competence to produce a readable writing or text.

3. Descriptive Writing

Den (2013) mentioned that writing a descriptive text is just like “painting a picture” with words. This means that writing this type of text involves describing something in detail through words. This process will provide the readers with clear descriptions of people, places, objects and events through the use of suitable details. When, for instance, reading a readable descriptive writing about Bali, people will feel like exploring the Indonesia’s most famous island. Most forms of writing involve description (Langmen, 2003). In real terms, an exposition, argumentation and narrative usually contain descriptive details. For example, an argumentative writing about the advantage of having regular exercise may start with some descriptive details of a famous athlete. Or, another example, a short story, which is categorized as narrative, is typically full of descriptive details of people, places, objects and events.

Den (2013) also has abridged that a good descriptive writing is comprised of five elements; sensory details, figurative language, dominant impression, precise language and careful organization. Sensory details “paint a picture” and appeals to all of the reader’s senses of sight, hearing, touch, smell and taste when appropriate; figurative language such as metaphor, simile, personification and hyperbola helps “paint the picture” in the reader’s mind; dominant impression helps the readers see what the writer sees, feel what the writer feels, and experience what the writer experiences; precise language helps the readers “see” what the writer describes; and careful organization deals with chronological (time), spatial (location) and order importance. From here, we can see that writing a descriptive text takes not only linguistic competence but also high-level imagination.

4. Perception

Cambridge Advanced Learner’s Dictionary (2008) provides three descriptions of perception; (1) belief or opinion based on how things seem, (2) the quality of being aware of things through the physical senses and (3) ability to notice and understand things that are not obvious to other people. Likewise, Demuth (2013) tends to view a perception as a process through which people attach meanings to experiences; the process usually happens when people attend to certain stimuli in their sensory memories. Simply, in Demuth’s (2013) notion, perception deals with opinion, belief, thought and experience. Conclusively, the exploration of students’ perception on the teacher’s questioning in teaching descriptive writing, which was to reach the third objective of the research, was to find out whether students have positive or negative opinions on the teacher’s questioning in the descriptive writing learning process in the EFL classroom.

RESEARCH METHOD

A. Research Design

The study employed a single-case study design. Following Yin's (2009) notion of single case study, the researcher viewed and investigated the research object, which was teacher's questioning in teaching descriptive writing, as a single case or phenomenon to explore appropriateness of the theories of questioning and writing teaching.

B. Operational Definition of Variables

To avoid ambiguities leading to misconception, the terms used in the research were clarified as follows; *Teacher's questioning* refers to teacher's act of asking questions in classroom interaction; it is a stimulant to students' critical thinking in the descriptive writing learning process. *Descriptive writing* means is a type of writing intended to provide descriptive details of people, objects, places or events.

C. Research Site and Subject

The research was undertaken at SMAN 28 Bone, South Sulawesi. Located in Lonrong, Ponre district. SMAN 28 Bone has 300 students that consist of 8 classroom which to be researched at class X MIPA 1 has 32 students and Class X MIPA 2 has 32 students. Of each class is taken just 5 Students for sampling. The total sample of population is 10 students and employs 1 EFL teacher. One of the EFL teachers was purposively picked as the research subject. Following Kothari's (2004) idea of purposive sampling technique, the researcher determined the teacher as the research subject for his teaching style in the writing learning process; according to the results of the researcher's preliminary observation, the subject was the EFL teacher with the most questions in teaching writing at the school.

D. Research Instruments

The researcher employed two instruments to obtain the data; observation and interview.

1. Observation
2. Interview

E. Procedure of Data Collection

The researcher conducted the data collection through the following procedure;

- The researcher attended the subject's class as an external observer; he was not involved in any activities held in the classroom during the teaching and learning process.
- While observing, the researcher performed audio recording and filled the observation field note form based on what he found dealing with the teacher's questioning.
- The researcher interviewed the teacher.
- The researcher interviewed the students.

F. Techniques of Data Analysis

Following the interactive model propounded by Miles, Huberman and Saldana (2014), the data analysis was carried out through the following steps; 1) Data Condensation , 2) Data Display 3) Conclusion Drawing and Verification

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

A. Findings

As described previously, to find the data leading to the findings, the researcher observed the descriptive writing teaching and learning process in the EFL classroom. Subsequently, the researcher interviewed both the teacher and students through semi-structured interview technique.

Following the research questions, this section presents the findings in three parts; (1) questioning strategies used by the teacher in teaching descriptive writing, (2) the teacher's purposes of using the questioning strategies, (3) students' perception on the teacher's questioning. The first part of the findings is result of the researcher's analysis of the teacher's talks in the descriptive writing teaching and learning process in the EFL classroom; the second is based on the researcher's analysis of the teacher's interview statements; and the third is outcome of the researcher's analysis of the students' interview statements.

1. Questioning Strategies Used by the Teacher in Teaching Descriptive Writing

Teacher's questioning, which is teacher's purposeful act of asking a question in classroom interaction, is typically performed through three strategies; lecture-based, fact-based and thinking-based strategy (Sadker, Sadker and Zittleman, 2011). The data obtained through the classroom observation elucidates that the teacher applied the three questioning strategies in teaching descriptive writing in the classroom. The data also reveals that a few questions asked by the teacher were based on the students' prior knowledge or what they had been taught previously. The table below displays the questions asked by the teacher in the two meetings observed by the researcher. The following parts elucidate how the teacher applied the four questioning strategies in his descriptive writing teaching in the EFL classroom.

a. Prior Knowledge-based Questioning

Using prior knowledge-based questioning strategy means asking the students a question which requires them to mention or explain what they have learnt previously. The extracts below cover how the teacher employed this questioning strategy in teaching descriptive writing in the EFL classroom by extract of meeting. The teacher's questioning presented in the above extract was obviously to ensure that the students had no problem with what they had learnt in the previous meeting. The occasion occurred at the beginning of the meeting. Apparently, the teacher asked the standard question since he knew that the previous lesson was strongly related to what the students were about to learn. In other words, the teacher's questioning was seemingly due to his assumption that the students' prior knowledge would help them understand the material which they were going to learn. Thus, this case is just in line with the previous one. Finally, the above findings lead us to understand that what is called prior knowledge-based questioning strategy is a questioning strategy applied by a teacher when intending to explore students' knowledge of the previous lesson. In fact, it is typically used at the beginning of the teaching and learning process in the classroom.

b. Lecture-based Questioning

Applying the lecture-based questioning means asking the students an occasional question in the middle of explanation about the material (Sadker, Sadker & Zittleman, 2011). The extracts below cover how the teacher employed this questioning strategy in teaching descriptive writing in

the EFL classroom as the same display above. Conclusively, it can be deduced that the teacher applied lecture-based questioning strategy in his descriptive writing teaching in the EFL classroom just to create and maintain classroom interaction with the students and to ensure whether his explanations and instructions were understandable to the students. In fact, during the descriptive writing teaching and learning process, the teacher hardly ever explained one thing without inserting a question into his explanation.

c. Fact- based Questioning

Employing the fact-based questioning means asking a question which is designed primarily to elicit facts; the feedback from the teacher revolves primarily around responses such as ‘right’, ‘good’, ‘yes’, and ‘no’ (Sadker, Sadker & Zittleman, 2011). The extracts below cover how the teacher used this questioning strategy in teaching descriptive writing in the EFL classroom.

d. Thinking-based Questioning

Using the thinking-based questioning means asking a question which encourages teacher-student or student-student dialogue; it typically stimulates thinking and discussion. The extracts below cover how the teacher used this questioning strategy in teaching descriptive writing in the EFL classroom.

2. The Teacher’s Purposes of Using the Questioning Strategies in Teaching Descriptive Writing

As described previously, to find the data dealing with the teacher’s purposes of using the questioning strategies in teaching descriptive writing, the researcher interviewed the teacher through semi-structured interview technique. The teacher’s interview statements imply that he had some purposes of using the questioning strategies. As we have seen, the teacher employed prior knowledge-based questioning to remind the students of the previous lesson and to commence classroom interaction with them; he used lecture-based questioning to maintain the classroom interaction and to ensure whether his explanation was understood by the students; and he applied both fact-based and thinking-based questioning just to help the students develop their ideas (brainstorming).

a. Prior Knowledge-based Questioning; To Remind Students of the Previous Lesson and to Commence Classroom Interaction with Them

The teacher had two purposes of asking questions through prior knowledge-based questioning strategy in his descriptive writing teaching in the EFL classroom; to remind the students of the previous lesson and to commence the classroom interaction with them. The extract below covers the teacher’s interview statements implying this. (I asked those questions at the beginning of the meeting, so they were also to commence the classroom interaction with the students.) In the teacher’s point of view, it was really important for the students to remember what they had learnt previously since it was strongly related to what they were going to learn in the meeting. In other words, the teacher firmly assumed that with sufficient mastery of the previous material, it would be easier for the students to understand what he was going to learn in the meeting. This was why the teacher applied prior knowledge-based questioning strategy before commencing his descriptive writing teaching. The teacher’s interview statements displayed in the

above extract also reveal that since such questioning was committed at the beginning of the meeting, it was expected to be a stimulant to the teacher-students interaction in the EFL classroom.

b. Lecture-based Questioning; To Maintain Classroom Interaction and to Check the Students' Comprehension

It elucidates that the teacher had two purposes of asking questions through lecture-based questioning strategy in his descriptive writing teaching in the EFL classroom; to maintain the classroom interaction and to ensure whether the students understood his explanation on the material. The extract below covers the teacher's interview statements implying this. (Yes. I think it has been my teaching style. When explaining the material, I usually insert some questions for the students dealing with the material in order to maintain the classroom interaction and to make the students involved in the discussion. Besides, such questions are to find out whether they understand my explanation.)

As we have seen, the teacher is already used to asking the students questions in the middle of his explanation about the teaching material, signaling that he is a teacher who prefers describing the material through interactive communication with the students to giving a long lecture. In fact, the teacher applied lecture-based questioning strategy in his descriptive writing teaching just to maintain the classroom interaction with the students or to avoid teacher-centered atmosphere in the teaching and learning process. The teacher also expected that such questioning would help him checking the students' comprehension of his explanation. Thus, it can be inferred that despite the two important purposes, the teacher's use of lecture-based questioning strategy in the descriptive writing teaching and learning process in the EFL classroom was also due to his teaching style.

c. Fact-based Questioning; To Help Students Develop their Ideas

It provides that the teacher applied fact-based questioning strategy just to help the students develop their ideas. The extract below covers the teacher's interview statements implying this. Most of them did not know what to write, so those questions were to help them develop their ideas. As you saw in the class yesterday, their answers to those questions were basically what they had to write down to build a descriptive text. So it was kind of brainstorming. The teacher seemed to deeply understand the problem faced by the students when writing a descriptive text; it was still difficult to develop their ideas. To help the students solve the problem, the teacher asked them some questions dealing with the persons, objects and places they were writing about. In fact, the students' answers to the questions served as the outline of their writing. Accordingly, it can be inferred that the teacher's use of fact-based questioning strategy in the descriptive writing teaching and learning process in the EFL classroom was essentially to brainstorm the students.

d. Thinking-based Questioning; To Help Students Develop their Ideas

It depicts that the teacher used thinking-based questioning strategy in his descriptive writing teaching in the EFL classroom to help the students develop their ideas. The extract below covers the teacher's interview statements implying this. (Such questions were also to help them develop their ideas, to make their writing also cover their personal opinions on the objects being written about, not only physical features and natures.) The teacher admitted his use of thinking-based questioning strategy in his teaching in the EFL classroom was also part of the efforts to

enable the students to develop their ideas in the descriptive writing. As we have seen, after making sentences describing physical features and natures of the persons, objects and places being written about, most of the students got stuck; they did not know how to continue their writing. To help the students solve the problem, the teacher asked them some questions which required them to think, and those questions dealt with their personal judgments and opinions on the persons, objects and places they were writing about. In fact, the students' answers to those questions were essentially sentences which they had to write down to continue their descriptive writing. Thus, it can be deduced that the teacher's use of thinking-based questioning strategy in the descriptive writing teaching and learning process in the EFL classroom was also to brainstorm the students.

3. Students' Perception on the Teacher's Questioning in Teaching Descriptive Writing

As described in the previous chapter, to find the data dealing with students' perception on the teacher's questioning in teaching descriptive writing in the EFL classroom, the researcher interviewed 5 of the students through semi-structured interview technique. The students' interview statements imply that they have three perceptions on the teacher's questioning in the descriptive writing teaching and learning process. As we have seen, 1 of the interviewed students admitted that the teacher's questioning helped them understand the concept of descriptive writing; 1 mentioned that it stimulated their critical thinking; and 3 stated that it helped them outline the descriptive writing task. Thus, it can be inferred that the students have positive perception on the teacher's questioning in teaching descriptive writing.

a. The Teacher's Questioning Helped the Students Understand the Concept of Descriptive Writing

Elucidates that according to one of the interviewed students, the teacher's questioning helped them understand the concept of descriptive writing. The extract below covers the student's statements implying this. The student tended to see the teacher's questioning as something good rather than a burden. As we have seen, according to the student, the teacher's questions in the teaching and learning process were essentially to lead the class understand the concept of descriptive writing. The student's interview statements displayed in the above extract seem to imply that it would be more difficult for the class to understand the learning material without the teacher's questioning. Thus, it can be inferred that the student has positive perception on the teacher's use of questioning in the descriptive writing teaching and learning process in the EFL classroom.

b. The Teacher's Questioning Stimulated the Students' Critical Thinking

It provides that according to two of the interviewed students, the teacher's questioning stimulated their critical thinking. The extracts below cover the student's statements implying this.

The Teacher's Questioning Helped the Students Outline their Descriptive Writing Task

It provides that two of the interviewed students viewed that the teacher's according helped them outline their descriptive writing task. The extracts below cover the student's statements implying. As described previously, it was not easy for many of the students to develop their ideas when writing a descriptive text, and the teacher tried to solve the students' problem by brainstorming them through questions dealing with the persons, objects and places they were writing about. The teacher's effort seemed effective. In fact, the two interviewed students admitted that the teacher's

questioning managed to lead them to construct their descriptive writing. As we have seen, the students' interview statements highlighted in the above extract do imply that the answers to the teachers' questions were basically the outline of what they were supposed to write to make a good descriptive text. Thus, what the students think about the teacher's questioning in the descriptive writing teaching and learning process in the EFL classroom can be categorized as positive perception. Finally, it can be deduced that the teacher's questioning was something good to the students. In other words, the students have positive perceptions on the teacher's acts of questioning in the descriptive writing teaching and learning process in the EFL classroom.

B. Discussion

This section provides further interpretations and in-depth discussion of the research findings. Subsequently, it describes how the research findings contribute towards the related theories and previous findings.

1. Questioning Strategies Used by the Teacher in Teaching Descriptive Writing

Teacher's questioning, which is teacher's purposeful act of asking a question in classroom interaction, is typically performed through three strategies; lecture-based, fact-based and thinking-based strategy (Sadker, Sadker and Zittleman, 2011). Nonetheless, the researcher found that not all the teacher's questions in the descriptive writing teaching and learning process in the EFL classroom were constructed through the three strategies. The above figure illustrates that in the descriptive writing teaching and learning process in the EFL classroom, the teacher constructed his questions through four questioning strategies; prior knowledge-based, lecture-based, fact-based and thinking-based questioning. As we know, Sadker, Sadker and Zittleman's (2011) notion only covers three of the strategies. Thus, it can be claimed that the research findings dealing with questioning strategies used by the teacher in teaching descriptive writing have enriched the three scholars' hypothesis of questioning strategies.

Using prior knowledge-based questioning strategy means asking the students a question which requires them to mention or explain what they have learnt previously. The research findings elucidate that the teacher used this strategy when describing the concept of descriptive text and how to write it. The researcher found the teacher's questions constructed through this strategy managed to make the EFL classroom "alive". Those questions succeeded in stimulating the students to get involved in the discussion of the material, hence, teacher-centered atmosphere could be avoided. Simply, the teacher's use of this questioning strategy enabled the material to be taught and learnt in interactive way. Thus, the research findings dealing with the teacher's use of lecture-based questioning are to confirm Sadker, Sadker and Zittleman's (2011) notion and Nyasimi's (2014) finding that questioning is one of the most common methods used in teaching writing. Employing the fact-based questioning means asking a question which is designed primarily to elicit facts. The research findings reflect that the teacher applied this strategy mostly in the context of brainstorming the students while they were having the writing task. Undoubtedly, the students' responses to the teacher's questions were basically the outline of their writing. In other words, those questions implicitly informed the students the things which they had to write down to accomplish their writing. Thus, it can be claimed that what the researcher found dealing with the

teacher's use of fact-based questioning strategy in the descriptive writing teaching and learning process is in line with Etemadzadeh, Seifi and Far's (2013) finding that teacher's questioning can significantly help improve students' writing. Using the thinking-based questioning means asking a question which encourages teacher-student or student-student dialogue; it typically stimulates thinking and discussion. The research findings elucidate that the teacher applied this strategy mostly to ask for the students' personal judgments on the persons, objects and places which they were writing about in the descriptive writing practice in the EFL classroom. In fact, the teacher's questions constructed through this strategy were to implicitly tell the students that they also had to insert their personal opinions into their writing. Obviously, what the researcher found dealing with the teacher's use of thinking-based questioning strategy is to support Etemadzadeh, Seifi and Far's (2013) finding that teacher's questioning can significantly help improve students' writing.

2. Teacher's Purposes of Using the Questioning Strategies in Teaching Descriptive Writing

Before commencing his teaching, the teacher asked the students a few questions constructed based on what he had taught in the previous meeting. In fact, the questions encouraged the students to recall the foregoing lesson, which was strongly related to the material which they were going to learn in the meeting. Undoubtedly, the teacher's questioning was due to his supposition that it would be difficult for the students to understand the material without sufficient mastery of the previous lesson. How the teacher employed prior knowledge-based questioning strategy in the opening session of the teaching and learning process seems so standard, yet, it is something that Abdullah and Nuwairi's (2015), Nyasimi's (2014) and Etemadzadeh, Seifi and Far's (2013) claims do not cover.

After the opening session, the teacher commenced describing the concept of descriptive writing and how to make it. Outstandingly, instead of providing his explanation through lecturing, the teacher tended to make the students understand the material through dialogues, which were built by his lecture-based questions and the students' responses. It is no doubt that the teacher's use of lecture-based questioning strategy when explaining the material was due to his intention to maintain the classroom interaction with the students and to check their comprehension of his explanation. Accordingly, it can be claimed that the research findings dealing with the teacher's purposes of using lecture-based questioning strategy in the descriptive writing teaching and learning process in the EFL classroom are to support what Nyasimi's (2014) claims. While having the writing task in the EFL classroom, many of the students were troubled by their inability to develop their ideas. To help them solve the problem, which is actually so "classical", the teacher asked them some questions constructed through fact-based and thinking-based questioning strategy. While the teacher's use of fact-based questioning strategy was intended to lead the students to write physical features and natures of the persons, objects and places that they had chosen to write about, his use of thinking-based questioning strategy was to implicitly inform the students how to insert their personal judgments and opinions into their writing. Conclusively, it can be stated that the research findings dealing with the teacher's purposes of using fact-based and thinking-based questioning strategy in the descriptive writing teaching and learning process in the EFL classroom are in line with Etemadzadeh, Seifi and Far's (2013) claims.

3. Students' Perception on the Teacher's Questioning in Teaching Descriptive Writing

In fact, during the teaching and learning process, the teacher hardly ever had a long monologue, hence, the class was greatly colored by dialogues between the teacher and students. Besides, the teacher's use of the questioning strategies seemed to succeed in helping the students understand the concept of descriptive writing and guiding them through the writing practice. As a result, the students seemed to enjoy the class and have positive perceptions on the teacher's acts of questioning. It provides that the students have three main ideas on the teacher's questioning in the descriptive writing teaching and learning process in the EFL classroom; (1) it helped them understand the concept of descriptive writing, (2) it stimulated their critical thinking, and (3) it helped them outline their descriptive writing. It is no doubt that none of the three ideas can be categorized as negative perception. In other words, in the students' perception, the teacher's acts of questioning positively contributed towards their descriptive writing learning and practice in the EFL classroom.

The researcher found that many of the teacher's questions encouraged the students to think. Even some of the questions stimulated them to think deeper and deeper just to find the answers. Amazingly, the students tended to view the questions as challenges rather than burdens. In fact, the students perceive the teacher's questioning as a stimulant to their critical thinking. Since writing is a task which requires critical thinking, the students' opinion on the teacher's questioning in the descriptive writing teaching and learning process in the EFL classroom can be categorized as positive perception. Obviously, this findings is to merely confirm Cotton's (2007) and Critelli and Tritapoe's (2010) notions of the importance of questioning in language teaching. Despite their knowledge of the concept of descriptive writing, which they obtained from the teacher's explanation, many of the students were still unable to accomplish the writing task properly because of their inability to develop their ideas. For this reason, the teacher helped them explore their ideas through his questions, which were mostly constructed through fact-based and thinking-based questioning strategy. What happened next was that the students got some description of how to "build" their descriptive text since the answers to those questions were essentially the outline of their writing. Accordingly, in the students' point of view, the teacher's questioning did brainstorm them; it helped them develop their ideas during the writing. Undoubtedly, this finding supports Etemadzadeh, Seifi and Far's (2013) claim that teacher's questioning can significantly help improve students' writing.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

A. Conclusions

It does not take a genius just to see how the teacher's questioning became something positive in the descriptive writing teaching and learning process in the EFL classroom. The research findings, which obviously imply this, are detailed as follows;

- The teacher employed four questioning strategies in teaching descriptive writing; prior knowledge-based, lecture-based, fact-based and thinking-based questioning.

- The teacher had five purposes of applying the questioning strategies; to remind the students of the previous lesson (prior knowledge-based), to commence classroom interaction with them (prior knowledge-based), to maintain the classroom interaction (lecture-based), to check the students' comprehension of his explanation (lecture-based), and to help students develop their ideas in the writing practice (fact-based and thinking-based).
- The students have three perceptions on the teacher's questioning; they perceive the teacher's questioning as a tool that helped them understand the concept of descriptive writing, a stimulant to their critical thinking, and brainstorming that helped them develop their ideas in the writing.

The following are concluding statements which are drawn based on the findings;

- Questioning was an important part of the teacher's strategy in teaching descriptive writing.
- The teacher's use of the four questioning strategies was due to his belief that the descriptive writing teaching and learning process in the EFL classroom could go smoothly through interactive communication, which were built by his questions and the students' answers.
- The students have positive perception on the teacher's questioning in the descriptive writing teaching and learning process in the EFL classroom.

B. Suggestions

It is no doubt that the teacher's questioning positively contributed towards the descriptive writing teaching and learning process in the EFL classroom. Considering the gratifying findings, the researcher kindly invites both EFL teachers and other researchers to contemplate the following suggestions.

The research findings reveal that the teacher's questioning was something positive to the teaching and learning process; it built and maintain the classroom interaction, helped the students understand the concept of descriptive writing, stimulated the students' critical thinking and helped the students develop their ideas in the writing practice. Thus, EFL teachers are expected to strengthen their questioning knowledge and skill for better writing teaching in the classroom.

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